

REMARKS

Claims 5-9 and 11 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 5-9 and 11 are amended for clarity and to correct informalities. Support for the amendment to claim 11 can be found, for example, on page 15, lines 15-23 of the specification. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Nguyen during the telephone interview held June 24, 2008 are appreciated. The reasons presented during the telephone interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 5-9 and 11 would be allowable if the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §101 and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, are overcome. Because the rejections are overcome for the reasons described below, claims 5-9 and 11 are in condition for allowance.

The Office Action objects to claims 8 and 9. The objection is obviated by the above amendments. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §101. The rejection is obviated by the above amendment to claim 11. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 5 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that it is unclear what the output of the third step should be and whether it should be in ascending or descending order. The sorted partial data strings generated in the third step are used in the fourth step to create input data string pairs for parallel processing. See, for example, page 22, lines 16-22, which discloses that sets of

merge input pairs are output to e10-e23. Therefore, the output of the third step is used in the fourth step to create an input data string pair for parallel processing. Further, claims 5 and 11 are amended to recite: "the plurality of partial data strings being sorted each in one of either ascending or descending order", for clarity. Support for this feature can be found in the specification at, for example, page 7, lines 3-8, which discloses that the sorted partial data strings can either be ascending or descending, where sorting in descending order by one key is described for the sake of convenience. Furthermore, the specification at, for example, page 22, lines 16-22 discloses that processing in descending and ascending order are performed. Thus, the features disclosed in the third step of claims 5 and 11 are clear.

The Office Action asserts that it is unclear what job information is and what the job information does. The term "job" corresponds to parallel processing of merge processing (see page 6, lines 13 and 14 of the specification). Therefore, claims 5 and 11 are amended for clarity to recite: "editing control information relating to parallel processing of merge processing". Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action asserts that the meaning of assigning a processor group for sorting is unclear. Claim 5 is amended for clarity to recite: "a sixth step of assigning to the plurality of divided partial data string pairs a processor group for merging of the plurality of divided partial data string pairs". A similar amendment is made to claim 11. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action asserts that the output of the seventh step is and the output of the invention is unclear. Claims 5 and 11 recite that the output of the invention is one data string. With respect to the seventh step, claims 5 and 11 are amended to recite: "a seventh step of performing merge processing by the assigned processor and outputting sorted partial data strings". Support for this amendment is found, for example, on page 10, lines 1 and 2 of the specification. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

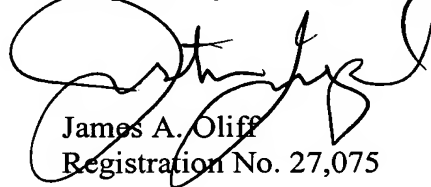
The Office Action asserts that other dependent claims are rejected because of the alleged deficiencies of their respective parent claims. In view of the above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of any dependent claims be withdrawn.

Therefore, for the reasons presented above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn. Thus, claims 5 and 11, and any claims depending therefrom, are patentable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Justin T. Lingard
Registration No. 61,276

JAO:JTL/hs

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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